



Sit in a dark room. But not just dark; black. No light at all. Use a towel to cover the crack under the door and tack a blanket over the window. Close your eyes and try to sit still. Fight the nausea. Fight the pain.

The fucking pain!

Eat kiwi. Chilled kiwi. Yes, that's bullshit advice, but you'll try anything. OTC meds – also bullshit, but again... anything. A doctor might prescribe steroids. They don't help either, but they will rot your nuts off.

Now. Here's the deal. Sit there in the dark, belly full of kiwi and Excedrin, and think about why your head feels as if it is being torn apart by a Jabberwocky.

No, really. Think about it. What? You got something better to do; folded over like a sofa bed with your head in your hands trying to hide from the pain? So, think, what what what is causing this pain? This goddamned migraine? Is it physical? Is it mental? And would one be better than the other?

Well let's break it down. Say it is physical. What does that mean? An aneurism or a tumor or maybe a parasite; a toothy worm creeping through the folds, chomping away at your precious grey matter. Any one of these scenarios would require a team of highly paid surgeons – and possibly helminthologists – to crack open your skull and go rooting around with sharp tools – and possibly a can of RAID. Sounds like fun, no?

Then there's mental. And how does that work, exactly? Maybe your very thoughts are so deviant and sinful that God himself has noticed and decided to blight you with this agony. See, you can't hide all those perverted things in your mind from God. He knows what a sick fuck you are, and you disgust Him. So, enjoy your migraine, asshole. You've earned it the hard way.

The initial reaction was to panic. The lump, the red skin. Sore to the touch, in such a place.... In such an odd place. Paul stood in front of the mirror and looked at it for many minutes; his stomach growing cold, sweat beading his forehead.

Too many minutes passed. Paul fell into sort of a trance.

Stop. Paul tore his eyes away. *I must get to work.*

Underwear came up swiftly; followed by shirt, pants, socks and shoes. Paul grabbed the keys and was out the door.

The discomfort started when he sat down in the car then grew throughout the course of the day. Paul adjusted his walk to accommodate the pain, affecting a sort of stiff-legged stagger, swinging out the right leg to avoid friction. He decided just not to

walk as much, staying at his desk through lunch and skipping his afternoon cup of coffee. He upended his disused recycle bin and propped his foot on it. This helped some, but the pain never left completely.

Paul found some extra work to do and that kept him at his desk until very late. Nobody was around to watch him limp from the office and gingerly set himself in the driver's seat. It was past nine by the time he got home. Too exhausted to eat, Paul decided to go right to bed.

He slipped off his pants. There was a discoloration – a rusty stain – spread across the front of his underwear. The fabric beneath the stain was dissented by a massive lump. Paul quickly snatched his pajama bottoms and pulled them on. He didn't even use the toilette before crawling into bed.

In the morning, Paul woke up dead.